The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and carries other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1541 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1940 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 30, NO. 43

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

No matter how tough the going gets, let us all remember always we are Americans. Let us remember that Americanism means tolerance. Let us leave hate and prejudice to Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini and their disciples in Europe. We don't want any part of that here.

This plea and this prayer is occasioned by widespread reports that discrimination is rearing its ugly head in American life. Americans of foreign birth or origin are feeling the effects of this country's honest and forthright indignation against the policies and practices of the European dictators.

Just because a man's origin is German, Italian or Russian is no reason why we should assume that he agrees with Hitler, Mussolini or Stalin. As a matter of fact most of our citizens who trace their ancestry to these European countries are refugees, or descendants of refugees, from the very things we abhor. That is why they and their parents came to this country in the first place. They refused to submit to tyranny and oppression, they sought freedom and independence, they were men and women of spirit and that's why they came here. That is also why there are good and true Americans.

The American Federation of Labor recognizes no distinctions of race, color or creed. Its tradition, like the American tradition, is an all-embracing conception of men and women as human beings, free and equal and aspiring to better their lot.

Counsel From the Past

Two generations ago, a convention of the American Federation of Labor adopted a creed which we are now reiterating here because of its eloquent statement of principle and because of its particular applicability to modern problems:

"This session of the American Federation of Labor marks an epoch in the progress of enlightenment in the world's history. We meet in solid phalanx, regardless of creed, regardless of dogma, with national pride, but without international prejudice. The world is our field of action' and man is our brother. We not only proclaim, under the sanction and untarnished banner of trade unionism, but live the principles of liberty, equality, fraternity and justice.

"Ours is an affiliation of men of like interests, and of a kindred spirit. It is the natural growth of a sentiment for unity that binds and seals the compact for harmony, fidelity and fellowship. Our cause demands that there is no worker so deep down in the abyss of misery and despair that we dare refuse to extend a helping hand in his uplifting; that there is no high pinnacle of grandeur to which the toiling masses should not aspire to attain.

"The trade unions are of, by and for the wage-workers primarily, but there is no effort which we in our movement can make but what will have its beneficent, salutary influence upon all our people. The misery of the past, the struggles of the present, and the duty for the future, demand that no effort be left untried, that all energy be exercised, and opportunity taken advantage of, to organize the toilers of our country upon the broad platform of the trade union, in full affiliation with the AFL.

"The clear, distant hope, with all its pain and travail, must give way to the better and brighter future for which the workers have borne the burdens, and made the sacrifices that the people of our time, and for all time, may be truly free."

Don't Emulate the Dictators

Let us not forget these inspired words and this noble example set for American labor by those who came before us. Instead let us apply their great counsel to our present-day problems.

We will remember the prejudices that were stirred up by the last World War, even the silly demands that opera companies cease playing music by German composers. Let us not repeat such unseemly nonsense.

Prejudice is much more blind than justice. It fails to face or recognize facts. Would it not be ridiculous for some Americans to vent prejudice against other Americans of foreign ancestry if both were in agreement on points at issue? Yet that is what is likely to happen if we lose our grip on realities and become blind to the issues. Let us not be deceived as are Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini, we should take care not to emulate them but to deal justly with our fellow men.

California Upholds Closed Shop; State Court Permits Picketing

San Francisco, Cal.—Picketing for a closed shop declared illegal by the California by the State Supreme Court. The tribunal set aside lower court rulings which granted the employer injunctions against picketing.

The important legal test involved the Retail Automobile Salesmen's Union (AFL) against the Howard automobile Co., San Francisco, Matthew A. Tobriner, counsel for the automobile salesmen, called the decision "the greatest advance ever made by labor through California judicial machinery."

The decision held that closed shop contracts are lawful, that picketing to establish a closed shop is lawful even in the absence of a dispute over hours, wages or working conditions and that an employer has no constitutional right to operate as a non-union shop. The court opinion said:

"The closed shop is an important lawful means of maintaining the bargaining powers of the workers. Advantages secured through collective action regardless of the desires of all employes whether members of the union or not.

"Labor insists, in a free economy, on the right to sell its labor, to whose patronage both depend for existence, on such facts as continuity of employment in any particular business. It is essential to labor's welfare and therefore consistent with democratic principles."

Railroad Unions Launch New Drive To Organize Shopcraft Foremen

Washington, D. C.—A nationwide drive to win collective bargaining agreements for craft and class supervisors of mechanics in railroad shops was launched by the Railway Employes' Department of the A. F. of L.

The campaign seeks to bring 12,000 to 15,000 such supervisory employes on the nation's carriers under the banner of the department, President Bert M. Jewell revealed. All are subordinate officials beneath the rank or title of general foreman.

Officers of general chairman of the shopcrafts on roads throughout the United States were mobilized by Jewell to press the drive. They are to get signed authorization cards from the supervisors, and then petition the National Mediation Board for certification of the shopcraft unions as bargaining agencies for the supervisors, as well.

After that is done, negotiations will get under way for contracts which will carry wage scales for supervisors.

This campaign, Jewell predicted, will completely wipe out efforts to form "dummy" unions among the supervisory employes.

Hitherto, while most of the supervisors retained membership in the unions from which they had been promoted, the unions have not bargained for them. Overall explained, the condition prevailed because the shopcrafts have been concentrating their energies on the elimination of "company unions" from the shops.

Now that nearly all of the "dummies" have been ousted, says the A. F. of L. unions are going into action to bring bona fide representation for the supervisors, as well.

HOUSING PROJECT INCLUDES ONE-FAMILY HOUSES, YARDS

New York, N. Y.—The New York City Housing Authority announced that several hundred families of low incomes who are now living under substandard housing conditions will be accommodated in the new housing project now being considered for the Clason Point section of the Bronx. Single family houses, two story apartment-buildings, front and back yards and other innovations not found in any other public housing project in New York will distinguish the development, which will cost $2,948,480.

The latest principles of community planning for small homes will be embodied in the variety of arrangement of the 334 row houses and the sixty-two two-story apartment buildings," the announcement said.

"The singly designed buildings will all be two stories high, cottage-type, with pitched roofs and small covered porches. All the buildings will be heated from three central heating plants. To avoid the monotonous effects of endless rows of houses, the project is planned with interesting courts of different shapes and sizes, attractively landscaped, around which will be grouped tenant gardens and lawns."

TEXTILE WORKERS WIN U. S. RUBBER CO. POLL

Winnsboro, S. C.—Encouraged by the sweep victory in winning the election here in the United States Rubber Company's big tire cord plant by the United Textile Workers of America, A. F. of L. affiliate, textile workers throughout the South have been active in organization work than ever before. The vote was 856 for the union to 297 against.

Gordon L. Chastain, John W. Pollard, L. James Johnson and other textile officials have been on the job and workers worked with the local members to bring home the bacon in chalking up this victory. An agreement is now being negotiated.

Two Million New Jobs Predicted In 1941 With Defense Expansion

Washington, D. C.—The Bureau of Agricultural Economics predicted that American business and industrial activity in 1941, influenced largely by national defense spending, should expand to the extent of employing at least two million more persons than in 1940.

Such an increase, when coupled with prospective enlargement of the armed forces under conscription, would, the bureau said, reduce the nation's unemployment rolls—which it pinned at between 8,000,000 and 9,000,000—to about 2,500,000 and 1,500,000.

These forecasts were contained in the bureau's annual outlook report on economic conditions for the year ahead.

Other developments forecast included "higher wholesale prices, some wage increases, improved domestic demand for farm products, under the stimulus and unstanched banner of trade unionism, but live the principles of liberty, equality, fraternity and justice.

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Henry Ohl, Jr., Dies in Washington; Heart Attack Fatal to AFL Official

Washington, D. C.—Henry Ohl, Jr., president of the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor, died in Emergency Hospital here October 16 shortly after suffering a heart attack in the headquarters of the American Federation of Labor. He was 67 years old.

Mr. Ohl was in Washington as a member of the Federal Board of Vocational Education, to which President Roosevelt had appointed him and as a member of the committee recently appointed by President Green of the American Federation of Labor to coordinate labor to defense.

Mr. Ohl was an outstanding figure in organized labor in the United States and had been president of the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor since 1937. He and shared very largely in the liberal movement in Wisconsin, the "laboratory of America" which gave the right of trial by jury in contempt cases and championed many social reform laws.

He made his home in Okauchee, Wis., and is survived by his widow, Mrs. Jessie Belschmann Ohl, and three children.

Mr. Ohl was born in Milwaukee and educated in the public schools of that city. He began working as a printer at the age of 13. In 1910 he was made secretary of the Allied Printing Trades Council of Milwaukee.

From 1910 to 1912 he was a clerk in the city of Milwaukee. Two years later he became an organizer for the American Federation of Labor and then Wisconsin State Federation of Labor. He served in the Wisconsin House of Representatives in 1917-18.

Since 1921 he has been editor of the Wisconsin Federation Bulletin and editor of Wisconsin Labor since 1924.

Mr. Ohl served as a member of the President's Advisory Council on Economic Security in 1934-35, had been a member of the Federal Board for Vocational Education since 1935, was secretary to the Wisconsin Unemployment Relief Commission in 1931-32, was a member of the Wisconsin Advisory Board on Unemployment Compensation in 1931-35 and a member of the Wisconsin Council on N. R. A. Employment Service in 1934-40.

The grief of organized labor at the loss of Mr. Ohl was expressed by President Green in the following tribute:

"Word of Henry Ohl's death came as a shock. He was an outstanding, highly qualified and most loyal leader. No man connected with our state federations was more respected. I know that we have suffered one of our greatest losses by his death."

Joseph A. Padway, A. F. of L. General Counsel and former attorney for the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor, said:

"Henry Ohl was a foremost leader of organized labor in the state a quarter century. He was a noble character and took a leading movement in Wisconsin on a very high plane. He was responsible for much of the liberal labor legislation.

Funeral services were held in Milwaukee on Oct. 18, attended by many members of the organized labor movement and men and women from all ranks of life in Wisconsin and other states. Interment was in Wisconsin Memorial Park.

STEEL INDUSTRY REPORTS NO SHORTAGE OF WORKERS

After a nation-wide inquiry, the American Iron and Steel Institute reported that the steel industry's supply of labor now exists nor is threatened in the steel industry. The Institute said that although a few of the larger companies it has surveyed stated the labor supply now readily available to them is unable to assure operation at full capacity. Several companies reported capacity operation with no labor shortage in sight.

SCHOOL SAVINGS DEPOSITS RISE $257,000 IN YEAR

The banks in the United States received school savings deposits totaling $13,111,212 during the year ending June 30, according to figures compiled made public by the Savings Division of the American Bankers Association. This amount was a gain of $257,000 over the previous year. School savings accounts were held by 2,930,477 pupils in 8,427 schools, compared with 2,543,472 pupils in 8,448 schools in the previous twelve months.

PHILADELPHIA BUTCHERS STRIKE FOR HIGHER WAGE

Philadelphia, Pa.—Unable to reach an agreement with wage committees and meat chains operating 1500 stores, the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, A. F. of L., called a strike affecting approximately 2,000 workers. The union asked wage increases ranging from $2.50 to $5 a week, reduction from 48 hours to 44 hours and two weeks vacation instead of one. It was also seeking appreciation of $500 union retail clerks also walked out in aid of the meat cutters demands.

D. C. BANK EMPLOYES NOW UNDER JOBLESS ACT

Washington, D. C.—An amendment to the District of Columbia Unemployment Compensation Act bringing national banks and their employes under provisions of the law was signed by President Roosevelt. The original Social Security Act excluded certain Government agencies, including banks. The banks now will pay the unemployment tax and their employes will receive benefits under the law.

News Briefs

RAILWAY CLERKS SIGN UP CHICAGO UNION STATION

Chicago, Ill.—The Brotherhood of Railway Clerks won a two-year fight for better working conditions at the Chicago Union Station.

An agreement was signed by the management establishing standard union conditions for the 700 employes represented by the Clerks and eliminating many abuses against which the Brotherhood had protested.

Two years of negotiations and 300 conferences were held in an effort to reach a settlement. On August 1, a strike was voted by a 94 per cent majority. Then the company yielded.

MACHINISTS HEAD VISITS PACIFIC COAST LODGES

Washington, D. C.—Harvey Brown, president of the International Association of Machinists, left for the West Coast to confer with lodges on important matters referred to him by the Executive Council.

His conferences will take him to Seattle, Los Angeles and other cities on tours, beginning Nov. 1, and the A. F. of L. convention, which starts on Nov. 18.

$260,000 BACK WAGES PAID BY ATLANTIC COAST LINE

Atlanta, Ga.—The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad began the distribution of $260,000 in back wages to 6,469 maintenance of way employes found to have been paid less than the minimum wages prescribed by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act from October 24, 1938, to May 21, 1940. The railroad agreed to make full restitution following a decree of Federal District Court in North Carolina which upheld the findings of the Wage and Hour Division of the U. S. Department of Labor.

ALIEN RULED ORDER BILL IS SIGNED BY ROOSEVELT

Washington, D. C.—President Roosevelt signed legislation recently passed by Congress requiring foreign controlled organizations and groups advocating the overthrow of the Government by force to register with the Department of Justice. The State and Justice Departments added to the preparation of the measure. Violators are subject to a fine of $10,000 or imprisonment of five years, or both. A fine of $2,000 and five years imprisonment may be imposed on persons filing false statements.

ELECTRICIANS CHARTER LOCAL IN SHREVEPORT

Shreveport, La.—A new local union with 75 charter members has been installed here by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, A. F. of L. affiliate. E. N. Williams, A. F. of L. representative of the Louisiana Federation of Labor and State Federation of Labor, assisted in the organization campaign which brought the local into being.

AFL LABORERS UNION WINS ELECTION BY 4-TO-1 VOTE

Birmingham, Ala.—Local Union No. 971, Laborers' Construction Construction Laborers, rolled up a 4-to-1 vote in favor of the union at an election held here for collective bargaining representative among employes of the Republic plant of the Sloss, Sheffield Steel and Iron Company. The workers were assisted in conducting the campaign and election by Hugh W. Brown, of the Birmingham office of the American Federation of Labor.

AUTO SALESMEN'S UNION CHARTERED IN MILWAUKEE

Milwaukee, Wis.—Automobile salesmen's Local No. 1291 has been chartered here by the Retail Clerks International Protective Association, A. F. of L. affiliate. The charter was given to the Local by Phil F. Koerner, international representative of the union here. Practically all of the 75 members of the Local were present at the ceremony. Koerner said the Local has county-wide jurisdiction and that plans had been made to organize the entire State.

HERSHEY WORKERS GAIN PAY-INCREASE CONTRACT

Hershey, Pa.—A new contract has been signed by the Hershey Chocolate Corporation and Local 464 of the Bakery and Confectionery Workers Union, A. F. of L. affiliate, reducing the hours of labor and at the same time increasing the hourly wage five per cent. The new agreement was made effective October 15 when the 40-hour week under the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act becomes operative throughout the nation. It was said the hourly wage increase will make up for the difference in the working time between the old contract calling for a 48-hour maximum work week and the new 40-hour contract.

REMARKABLE GAINS MADE BY LABOR IN KENTUCKY

Louisville, Ky.—Under the leadership of Edward H. Weyler, A. F. of L. representative in Kentucky, and with the cooperation of the State Federation of Labor and international union representatives, more than 15,000 new members have been added to the A. F. of L. unions in Kentucky this year. In every case closed shop agreements embodying increases in wages, vacations with pay and better working conditions have been gained. Closed shop conditions with 1,000 workers members in the Belcher Workers' Union. The Teamsters Union has signed hundreds of new contracts and practically every Kentucky city is now organized. Wm. L. Pitts, representative of the Typographers and Carpenters, has installed six locals in Kentucky.

Five locals unions of the Distillery Workers have been established in Louisville. Closed shop agreements with increases in pay and vacations have been obtained with the Distillery Workers. A charter recently was installed for Western Union employes in the State.

LYONS WARNS OF ATTACKS ON RIGHTS OF WORKERS

New York, N. Y.—Thomas J. Lyons, president of the New York State Federation of Labor, told the conference on labor and defense at the Labor School that workers must be on guard against attempts to deprive them of their rights and legitimate gains in the various industrial activities of the defense program.

Pointing out that labor is a vital factor in defense, with success or failure depending upon the cooperation of labor, Mr. Lyons said that no A. F. of L. union would resort to strike against defense industries, but had effected compromises of differences. He said, "In other words, they are blood-brothers of the moneyed, privileged clique which saved the way for fascism in Germany, Italy and France and who brought Great Britain to the brink of disaster."

GREEN OPPOSES HOOVER PROGRAM

Says Food Should Be Sent To War Victims Only If Dictators Keep Hands Off.

New York, N. Y.—In a telegram to Herbert Hoover, President William Green of the American Federation of Labor opposed sending food from this country to the conquered peoples of Europe unless some plan can be devised to guarantee that the supplies will not fall into the hands of Dictators Hitler and Mussolini and be used by them for the furtherance of their war of aggression against Europe's remaining democracies.

The telegram to Mr. Hoover was in response to a message in which the former President asked support for a movement he heads to bring relief to war stricken areas.

"All the facts and information submitted in your telegram have been given careful thought and serious consideration," Mr. Green telegraphed Mr. Hoover. "I approved the statement you refer to because it occurs to me that it is asking too much of Great Britain in her struggle for democracy, her distress and unequal struggle with totalitarian nations to lift her blockade, though the reasons you assign for asking her to do so may be human and praiseworthy.

"It would seem contradictory for us in America to create a situation which might mean that the dictators who have waged the cruel war and who are responsible for the suffering which exists in Continental Europe could secure more food which will give them to carry on their ruthless barbaric and uncivilized war.

"The responsibility for hunger and suffering in Continental Europe rests with Dictators Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and their associates and they deeply touched by the distress which prevails among those living in countries which were invaded by Hitler and his associate dictators. If a plan could be devised which would provide that they would be fed, clothed and cared for without inflicting a blow upon Great Britain I would support it.

"I am opposed to the extension of aid to Hitler and Mussolini and to the creation of a situation which might enable them to secure food and supplies for their armies. I authorized my name to the statement you refer to after I had studied the situation carefully and conscientiously."

Wage Board Asks $5,000,000 Pay Boost For 100,000 Workers In Navy Yards

Secretary Knox to Act on Higher Wage Scales Recommended By AFL Metal Trades

Washington, D. C.—Wage increases aggregating $5,000,000 a year for 100,000 Government Navy Yard workers were recommended to Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox by the Naval Wage Review Board.

This board, a five man body named by the Navy Department, spent four months studying wage scales at the navy yards and in comparable private industries before completing its job.

The final report, will not be officially released for publication until it has been studied and considered by Secretary Knox, but it was learned from authoritative sources that wide pay increases were suggested.

The Wage Board was established as a result of demands by the Metal Trades unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. The unions pointed out that pay rates in the Navy Yards are actually at one time higher than in similar occupations in private industry, have lagged behind in recent years.

The facts were presented in detail to the Wage Board hearings held last June. American Federation of Labor officials submitted conclusive proof that yard workers have not kept their wage scales which should be corrected if the Government wants to give its workers a square deal.

Men employed at the Navy Yard are among the most highly trained workers in America. The job they do demand the highest skill and precision. Many of them could command considerably higher wages in private industry.

The union spokesman warned the Board that these workers could not continue such sacrifices indefinitely and that they should be paid the scales to which they are entitled as a matter of simple justice. They pointed out also that wage rates must be lifted to attract new men who will be needed as the defense program expands.

These arguments were made all the more convincing by the fact that Navy Department officials have been informed of attempts by private industries to lure away skilled technicians and mechanics with promises of higher pay.

W. A. Calvin, secretary-treasurer of the Metal Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor, served as labor's representative on the Naval Wage Board and devoted months to the task of studying all the evidence submitted and drafting the final report.

BAN ON "ISMS" URGED BY ELECTRICIANS HEAD

Baltimore, Md.—The fortieth anniversary of the founding of Local 28 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers was celebrated here at a meeting in which local, State and AFL officials joined with labor. The celebration, described as one of the most impressive in the history of Baltimore labor, included a birthday banquet at the Lord Baltimore Hotel, a sightseeing tour and other festivities.

The chief speaker at the banquet was Thomas N. Todd A. F. of L. of the Brotherhood, who told of remarkable gains in membership, working standards and increases made by the Electrical workers in recent years and ascribed this to co-operation between the union and employers. Such co-operation, he said, will assure further progress.

Brown also declared that it is the Brotherhood's aim to free its ranks of all subversive elements and he urged all loonis to assist.

"The union should leave the courage," he said, "to bar from membership anyone subscribing to any 'ism' other than Americanism."

Other speakers included the Brotherhood's international chief, Dan W. Tracy, now assistant secretary of labor; its counsel, Isaac Lobe Straus, former attorney general of Maryland and such public figures as Senator George L. Radcliffe, Governor Herbert R. O'Conor, Mayor Howard W. Jarvis, Harry Nice, Congressman Thomas D'Alesandro and Mayor Howard Jackson of Baltimore.

A highlight of the affair was the presentation of pins to all surviving charter members of the local, and to all veteran members who are on the union's pension rolls.

BUILDING SERVICE UNION AWARDED WAGE INCREASES

New York, N. Y.—John Sloan as arbitrator under the collective bargaining agreement between the Realty Advisory Board and Local 32-B of the Building Service Employes International Union, A. F. of L. handed down an award under which approximately one-third of the 30,000 janitor, handy man and apartment house workers covered by the agreement would receive wage increases.

The minimum pay for employes in Class C lofts was raised from $24 a week to $26 a week. Janitors in all kinds of office and loft buildings will receive pay of $2 a week above the minimum and assistant starters will get $1 above the minimum. Apartment house handy men will receive $5 a month above the minimum, while in office and loft buildings the premium for handymen will range from $2 to $4 a week.

Impartial Chairman Sidney A. Wolff also awarded weekly wage increases of 50 cents to $1 to 7,500 members of Local 32-B.